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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/ERA

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TAGS: UN PGOV PREL AU

SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN VIEWS IN ADVANCE OF THE GAERC

REF: 5/9/09 EUR/ERA EMAIL (GIAUQUE)

Classified by: Economic-Political Counselor J. Dean Yap for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) Polchief met May 13 with Klaus Famira, MFA European Correspondent, to discuss the agenda items for the upcoming GAERC. Famira offered the following views:

-- Iran: GAERC participants are not expected to make any decisions on further Iran sanctions. Most EU-member governments want to wait for the results of the upcoming Iranian elections, as well as any new developments regarding the E3 3 or U.S.-Iranian relations, before taking any new steps.

-- Israeli-Palestinian Peace: Famira noted that FM Spindelegger had attended the May 11 UNSC meeting on the Middle East, and said he would report on the meeting at the GAERC.

-- Georgia: Georgia will likely be added to the agenda. If so, participants would discuss a letter submitted by French FM Kouchner calling for closer trade relations between the EU and Georgia and easier access to EU visas for Georgians. They would also discuss the future of the OSCE and UN presence in Georgia.

-- Bosnia: Famira said the EU has made preparations for an eventual drawdown of the EUFOR peacekeeping operation, but has not made any decisions on timing. The GOA favors maintaining EUFOR at its current level until the Peace Implementation Council decides to abolish the Office of the High Representative, which the GOA expects to happen by the end of 2009.

-- Sri Lanka: Kouchner and UK FS Miliband will report on their recent visit to Sri Lanka.

YAP